

Governor's Proposed FY23 Budget Adjustments
Appropriations Hearing
HB 5037 AAC the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30th, 2023
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Thursday, February 24th, 2022

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representative Dathan, Representative Nolan, Senator Miner, Representative France, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Wanda Austin and I am a registered voter in city of Bridgeport.

I am here to testify in regards to the governor's proposed budget for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

I started being a member at Bridge House about four years ago. If I didn't find Bridge House, my life would be very different. I believe I would be hospitalized or even dead. So this mental health program really saved my life.

There are not many programs like Bridge House. I received a lot of support from my case manager, and the other staff. I have also developed strong relationships with the other members.

One of the most important supports I received was surrounding my PTSD. They recognized my suffering and helped me find safe ways to deal with my feelings.

Bridge House also taught me things I did not know and helped me get a job when I was strong enough. In closing, this program saved my life and they have become my family. I ask you to increase the funding for mental health services.

Thank you